

Chapter 27: Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

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Chapter 27 – Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program

The Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program (FFVP) provides all children in participating schools with a variety of free fresh fruits and vegetables throughout the school day. It is an effective and creative way of introducing fresh fruits and vegetables as healthy snack options. The FFVP also encourages the education of families and the creation of partnerships with members of the community as an overall way of increasing the health and wellness of both students and those in the community in which they live.

Goals of the FFVP

The goals of the FFVP are to:

- Create healthier school environments by providing healthier food choices.
- Expand the variety of fruits and vegetables children experience.
- Increase children's fruit and vegetable consumption.
- Make a difference in children's diets to impact their present and future health.

Program Administration

At the federal level, the FFVP is administered by the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) Food and Nutrition Service. At the state level, the FFVP is administered by the Office of Health and Nutrition Programs, South Carolina Department of Education (SCDE). At the local level, the FFVP is administered by any person designated by the School Food Authority (for example, the food service director, a teacher, a building principal or a school nurse).

Program History

The Farm Security and Rural Investment Act of 2002

The FFVP initially began as a pilot project authorized by Congress in 2002. The pilot provided funds to purchase fresh fruits and vegetables in four states and one Indian Tribal Organization for the 2002-2003 school year. The purpose of the pilot was to determine the best practices for increasing fruit (both fresh and dried) and fresh vegetable consumption in schools.

Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004

The success of the pilot resulted in an expansion of the FFVP and made it a permanent program under the Child Nutrition and WIC Reauthorization Act of 2004 in four additional states and two additional schools from Indian Tribal Organizations.

The Agriculture, Rural Development, FDA, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2006

This act appropriated a one-time funding of \$6 million to further expand the FFVP in six additional states.

Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008

The Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2008 expanded the Fresh Fruit and Vegetable Program nationwide and provided approximately \$9.9 million to begin program operations for the 2008-2009 school year.

The Food, Conservation, and Energy Act of 2008 (Farm Bill)

The Farm Bill amended the National School Lunch Act by eliminating section 18(f) and adding section 19, the FFVP. Section 19 permanently authorized the program nationwide, consolidated all prior operations under section 19 and provided a significant funding increase, beginning with \$40 million in fiscal year 2009.

In July 2008, the FFVP was in operation in selected schools in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Guam, Puerto Rico and the Virgin Islands.

FFVP in South Carolina

South Carolina has implemented the FFVP since it became available to all states for the 2008-09 school year.

School Year	Grant Allocation	Schools Participating
2008-09	\$845,918.00	34
2009-10	1,225,145.00	51
2010-11	1,869,917.00	86
2011-12	2,724,946.00	129
2012-13	2,819,802.00	132
2013-14	2,854,277.00	149
2014-15	3,020,778.99	145
2015-16	3,068,913.00	149
2016-17	3,206,294.00	152
2017-18	3,376,250.00	139
2018-19	3,620,487.10	169
2019-20	3,169,137.60	146

Program Funding

Each participating school is given \$50-\$75 per student for the program for the year. Only ten percent or less of the total money received may be used for labor and benefits. At least 90 percent must be spent on fresh fruits and vegetables and supplies.

Requirements for Participation

To be selected for participation in the FFVP, schools must:

- Be an elementary school;
- Operate the National School Lunch Program;
- Submit an application for participation (see the “Application for FFVP Participation” section below);
- Have 50 percent or more of its students eligible for free or reduced-price meals;
- Demonstrate an ability to properly implement and operate the FFVP. SCDE uses the grant application process, and prior participation in the FFVP when applicable, to determine a school’s ability to implement and operate the FFVP. Priority is given to schools with higher percentages of free and reduced price students.

Application for FFVP Participation

To participate, an online grant application provided by the SCDE, Office of Nutrition Programs must be completed for each school that wishes to participate. Applications and grant technical assistance is widely publicized by SCDE and is available online in the spring of each year. Applications must be completed using the online application process and submitted by the deadline. Applications must be complete and strictly follow all grant guidelines to be considered. Grant funds are awarded based on the highest percentage of free and reduced student eligibility.

Program Requirements

Participating schools are required to:

Provide a variety of fresh fruits and vegetables to all enrolled students during the school day, outside of the breakfast and lunch meal periods.

Have a detailed implementation plan that includes the following information:

- How the FFVP will be integrated with other efforts to (1) promote health and nutrition, reduce overweight and obesity, and/or
- Promote physical activity. Such a plan is likely to incorporate fresh fruit and vegetable snacks into classroom lessons on a regular basis, a school motto or health and wellness message, and/or a school-wide health and wellness program.
- How and when the fresh fruits and vegetables will be delivered or given to all enrolled students in the school.
- How schools will provide nutrition education to enrolled students.
- Be familiar with all food safety and Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Point (HACCP) principles for fresh produce.
- Widely and creatively publicize among students and their parents/guardians the availability of free fresh fruits and vegetables.

- Partner with community members to (1) educate students and parents on the benefits and availability of fresh fruits and vegetables and/or (2) provide students with fresh fruits and vegetables.
- Spend all funds allocated within the award period. This is a requirement to be eligible to participate in the FFVP during future funding cycles.
- Submit a monthly claim for reimbursement using SCAPS.
- Have documented support for the FFVP from the food service manager, food service supervisor/director, principal, and district superintendent.

Allowable Activities

Grant funds may be used to support the following activities:

- Adjusting the selection of fruits and vegetables to purchase and serve more of students' favorites and avoid items that are unselected, uneaten, and wasted.
- Ensuring fruits and vegetables are appealing and easy to grab. If necessary, precut items to make them easier, more appetizing, and neater for children to eat.
- Only low-fat dressing can be used as a dip for vegetables only.
- Introducing children to varieties of a fruit (such as Bartlett, Bosc, and Seckel Pears) or a vegetable (Bell, Sweet Banana, and Poblano Peppers).
- Considering and using, if appropriate, more pre-cut fruits and vegetables and pre-prepared trays to control labor costs and address the lack of extra storage space.
- Offering whole fruits on days when staff cannot prepare trays of pre-sliced fruits or vegetables.
- Scheduling the serving of prepared fruits and vegetables as a nutrition education activity.

Non-Allowable Expenditures

The FFVP does not allow funds to be used to purchase:

- Processed or preserved fruits and vegetables (i.e., canned, frozen or dried)
- Prepared salsa/guacamole
- Any dips or dip ingredients to accompany fruit
- Apple cider
- Fruit or vegetable juice – schools cannot purchase juice and cannot buy produce for the sole purpose of making juice out of it.
- Snack type fruit products such as fruit strips, fruit drops, fruit leather
- Jellied fruit
- Trail mix
- Seeds and nuts
- Cottage cheese

- Fruit or vegetable pizza
- Smoothies
- Water, plain or flavored
- Yogurt covered dried fruit
- Eggs
- Fruit that has added flavorings (including fruit that has been injected with flavorings)
- Carbonated fruit drink
- Pumpkins, Gourds (used for decorations, not consumed)
- Nutrition education materials
- Promotional materials, signage
- Holiday decorations
- Office supplies – paper, pens, pencils, folders, binders, markers, labels
- Seeds, tools or supplies for school garden
- Most non-food items, except those allowed under administrative/operational costs

FFVP Limits

- Dips for vegetables
- If you choose to serve dip with vegetables, make sure to only offer low-fat, yogurt-based or other low-fat or non-fat dips
- The amount used should be what is commonly noted as a “serving size” for condiments, as shown on Nutrition Fact Labels: 1 to 2 tablespoons
- Service of “prepared” vegetables
- Fresh (not canned, frozen, dried or otherwise processed) vegetables that are cooked, must be limited to once-a-week and must always include a nutrition education lesson related to the prepared item.

FFVP Paperwork

Participation in the FFVP requires schools to follow reporting and recordkeeping requirements that are similar to those for the National School Lunch Program (NSLP). Paperwork to be completed and maintained on file includes, but is not limited to, the following.

- School Applications
- Grant Award Notification (GAN)
- Assurances and Terms and Conditions
- Administrative Review (AR) documents
- Semi-Annual and End-of-Year Reports
- Policy memoranda
- Budget tracking record

- Addendum
- Invoices
- Monthly claims
- Production Records
- Timesheets
- Equipment Request Form
- Purchase order information
- Procurement Bid documents
- Vendors/local farmers communications
- Records related to grant programs shall be maintained for six (6) years after the end date of the grant when the final expenditure report claim for reimbursement and all final reports have been submitted, unless informed otherwise or in the case of litigation.
- Records must be kept longer if your school has any unresolved audit/review findings.
- Reimbursement Claim
- Monthly reimbursement claims are due to the SCDE by the 10th of each month. The monthly claims is processed via the South Carolina Automated Processing System (SCAPS) for reimbursement. To support the reimbursement claims submitted, invoices detailing purchases of fresh produce, supplies, small equipment, and documentation for labor and fringe benefits paid with FFVP funds should be maintained on file and available for review and/or audit purposes.
- Production Record
- A production record should be maintained to support the purchase and service of fresh fruits and vegetables in the FFVP.

Administrative Review

FFVP participating schools will be included in the district's Administrative Review process. Any documentation generated during this process should be maintained on file according to appropriate guidelines.